

**From:** Press Release from Iowa Governor's Office [PressReleases.IGOV@iowa.gov]  
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**Subject:** GOVERNOR CULVER SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING TASK FORCE ON DEPENDENT CARE

**Attachments:** Dependent Care Task Force.pdf

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**Governor Chet Culver « Lt. Governor Patty Judge**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*  
*February 17, 2009*

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## **GOVERNOR CULVER SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING TASK FORCE ON DEPENDENT CARE**

*New Group Formed to Prevent Situations Such as in Atalissa*

DES MOINES – Pledging to fully investigate an unlicensed community residence in Atalissa and prevent similar facilities from ever operating in Iowa, Governor Chet Culver today signed Executive Order 11 to create a Dependent Adult Task Force. The duties of the Task Force include recommending steps to strengthen and improve state laws and regulations on the care and treatment of dependent adults.

“The situation in Atalissa was deplorable, and I want to do everything we can in Iowa to make sure people, especially the most vulnerable among us, never face those kind of living and working conditions again,” said Governor Culver. “While I am pleased that the 21 men who resided at Henry’s Turkey Service are now being properly cared for, I am very concerned that a situation like this could have happened in the first place.”

“I want to get to the bottom of this situation, and determine whether this most recent

mistreatment of dependent adults was an isolated incident or is the result of systemic problems in existing laws, regulations and practices,” added Governor Culver.

The Task Force will be chaired by the John McCalley, director of the Iowa Department of Elder Affairs, and include representatives of the Governor’s Office, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Inspections and Appeals, the Department of Public Safety, the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, and the Labor Commissioner.

Governor Culver has given the Task Force the following responsibilities:

- Review Iowa laws, regulations, policies and procedures related to the care and employment of dependent adults with mental retardation;
- Engage the assistance and services of state agencies, members of the nonprofit and nongovernmental sector, interested groups and citizens who are not formally named to the Task Force, but who can assist with analysis of and access to data bases and systems that might help detect the existence of unregulated congregate residential settings and non-registered and/or unregulated workplaces where there may exist abuse or neglect of dependent adults with mental retardation;
- Determine the extent to which dependent adults with mental retardation are residents of or are receiving care in unlicensed facilities;
- Assess existing methods, both within Iowa and in other jurisdictions, of preventing, investigating and taking enforcement action against persons who neglect, abuse or take advantage of dependent adults with mental retardation;
- Identify and recommend potential regulatory or statutory changes that would improve prevention and enforcement efforts and systematically address the problem of the mistreatment of dependent adults with mental retardation in the State of Iowa;
- Develop a plan and a timeline, with input from appropriate stakeholder groups, to redress the problems caused by and prevent the mistreatment of dependent adults with mental retardation through coordinated legal and regulatory changes; and
- Identify and recommend ways to prevent the mistreatment of dependent adults with mental retardation, such as through the dissemination of educational materials, thereby reducing the need for corrective action.

The Task Force will submit of final report and recommendations to the Governor no later than April 1.

“If laws need to be changed to prevent this situation from ever taking place again, then I want to address them now, while the legislature is still in session,” said Governor Culver.